

Transport and Care of Horses

FACT SHEET – FOR HORSES AT SALEYARDS

AUTHOR: DR. MARIKO LAUBER

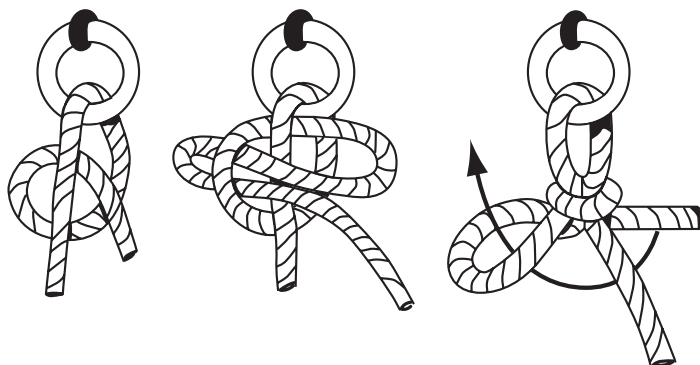
Having bought a horse from a Saleyard/Auction you need to ensure that you are prepared/able to provide adequate transport to your horse's new home and can care for it appropriately. This brochure provides basic information regarding your obligations towards your new horse for transport and care and the contact details of different groups/websites that can provide you with more information.

Transporting your Horse Home:

Key Things to Remember:

- Ensure that your vehicle (horse truck or float) is strong and secure enough to safely contain the horse and prevent escape. A rigid roof over the length of the crate is desirable.
 - *Internal surfaces of the float/truck should be smooth and free of obstructions/hazards that could cause injury (protruding nails/clips etc.).*
 - *Flooring of float/truck and loading ramps should be made of a non-slippery surface and if necessary be fitted with foot battens.*
 - *Each horse should be able to stand in a natural position with adequate head room and enough space between horses for air circulation.*
 - *Adjustable partition boards should always be used when transporting more than one horse – partitions should be at least 600mm high and placed at least 600mm off the floor.*
 - *If you are moving your horse using a two horse trailer, a single horse should be tied on the driver's side and the centre partition removed for improved vehicle balance.*
 - *If transporting two horses, the heavier horse should be penned on the driver's side.*
- Ensure that the vehicle is not polluting the air inside the transport area.
- Ensure that the transport area is clean and dry.
- Correctly fit any protective equipment (rugs, knee or hock boots, bandages, hoods etc.) before loading your horse.

- Headstalls and lead ropes are usually the easiest way of leading your horse into and out of a transport vehicle and securing them. Tie your horse using a quick release knot.



- Sticks, lengths of plastic, metal piping, heavy leather belts/straps, and any other objects must not be used to beat horses when loading/unloading them.
 - *Dogs or electric prods must never be used to aid the loading of horses.*
- Transporting over long distances – check your horse after 30mins in transit and then every 4 hours.
- When you arrive at your destination quietly enter your transport vehicle, untie your horse before lowering the ramp and allow it to move out of the transport vehicle at its own pace.
- Horses should be unloaded from the transport vehicle as soon as you reach your destination and offered food and water and a comfortable place to rest. If your horse appears stiff from travelling you should walk him/her around gently until movement improves.

Detailed information about your responsibilities when transporting horses can be obtained from the Code of Practice for the Land Transport of Horses. <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare>



Caring for your Horse:

Your horse requires food, water, shelter and space. The following is a list of basic requirements. For more information please visit: www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses.

Supervision:

- You need to check your horse at least once every day to ensure they have adequate water, feed and they are not injured.
- If your horse is injured seek veterinary advice immediately.

Shelter/Space/Exercise:

- Horses require room to walk and run – a general rule of thumb is 2 acres (1 Ha) per horse of grazing area.
- Horses require shelter from extremes of sun, wind and rain. Trees and or a walk-in shed make suitable shelter in your paddock. [A waterproof rug may help protect

your horse from cold weather, but it must be checked daily for slipping, leaking and rubbing]

- Sick or injured horses may need to be confined under the directions of a veterinarian – you will need access to a yard/stable for confinement. Long-term tethering of horses is not acceptable.
- Ensure that the fences of your paddock are in good repair to prevent injury.
- Ensure that your paddock is free from rubbish and weeds that could cause illness or injury or escape.

Agistment: keeping your horse on land owned by someone else. Generally, unless otherwise agreed to, you are responsible for the day to day maintenance and care of your horse when agisted.

For information about your responsibilities and rights in an agistment arrangement please visit:

www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses

Feed and Water:

Horse Size	Forage/Roughage Requirement (pasture, hay or chaff)	Water requirement	Supplementary feed
Pony (up to 13.5 hands, 200-350kg)	3-7kg/day	Clean water must always be available – dams or self-filling troughs are the most appropriate. If your water supply is not self-filling it must be checked daily. 25-45L in hot weather	May be required if ridden regularly depending on horse condition – if ribs are showing horse is too thin -pronounced rump and thickened neck visible, horse too fat
Galloway (13.5-15 hands, 350-500kg)	7-10kg/day		
Horse (15-16.5 hands, 500-650kg)	10-13kg/day		
Heavy Horse (16.5+ hands, 650+kg)	13+ kg/day		

Horses require access to approximately 1-2kg of good quality feed (pasture, hay or chaff) per 100kg body weight each day.

Handy-Hints

- Supplementary feed may also be necessary if you are riding your horse regularly, or if your horse is underweight, pregnant or lactating
 - o Salt lick or mineral blocks should be made available in paddock.

Further information about feeding horses can be obtained from DPI Agnotes: Feed Budgets for Horses, Small Farm: Feeding Horses, Small Farm Grazing Management for Horses and Small Farm: Pasture for Horses available at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses.

General Horse Care:

Feet	Teeth	Worming
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should be trimmed by a farrier every 6-8 weeks. ▪ Shoes required if horse is being ridden on rough or rocky ground. ▪ Cost: \$35-\$100. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Must be checked by a horse dentist every 12 months. ▪ Horses under 5 years of age or being fed grain regularly should be checked every 3-6 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Worming horses prevents worm build up in intestine. ▪ Should be done every 6-8 weeks. ▪ Reduce manure in paddocks to reduce worm contamination.
Vaccination	Body Condition	Laminitis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Veterinary advice should be sought regarding vaccination against tetanus, viral respiratory disease and strangles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Avoid allowing your horse to become too fat or too thin – see DPI Agnote “Condition Scoring and Weight Estimation of Horses” for more information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Occurs in overweight horses. ▪ Painful hoof condition that can become untreatable. ▪ If your horse appears lame, uncomfortable or stands in water for long periods consult your vet immediately.

***Company** – horses require company either in the same or neighbouring paddocks. Horses kept on their own can develop behaviour problems.

Riding your horses: If you have little or no experience riding a horse you should seek professional training from a riding instructor, pony/adult horse club, or riding establishment.

Purchasing properly fitting riding equipment is essential to ensure your safety and prevent injury to your horse. Consult with your local saddlery and/or riding instructor for advice on the appropriate riding equipment for you and your horse.

For more information about transport and care of horses contact: please consult your private veterinarian or local DPI Animal Health staff via the DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186 or email customer@dpi.vic.gov.au, or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/farming/horses.